

REMARKS

In general, the application relates to apparatus, methods, and computer code for detecting falsified and/or unreliable router status messages. Independent claim 1, for example, prior to the above amendment, recited comparing signals corresponding to status messages from routers on either end of a communications link, wherein each status message indicates the status of the communications link. The claim further recited issuing an alarm if the signal comparison indicates that the status messages are inconsistent. Such an inconsistency, according to the application, is a symptom of an untrusted party having gained control of one of the routers, thereby endangering the network on which the routers operate. Thus, the application is aimed specifically at detecting inconsistencies between status messages, regardless of the actual content of each status message.

The undersigned, having recently been appointed as new counsel for Applicant and having thoroughly reviewed the file history of the application, understands the crux of the Examiner's rejection of the independent claims to be the following:

- LeDuc describes a system which compares status signals corresponding to device ports on either end of a communications link.
- In LeDuc, if even one signal indicates that its corresponding port is out-of-service, the system issues an alert that the link is inoperable.
- Thus, LeDuc discloses issuing an alarm if both signals indicate their corresponding port is out-of-service, and also issuing an alarm if only one of the two signals indicates that its corresponding port is out-of-service.
- The undersigned understands the Action to be asserting that, in the latter scenario, the signals are inconsistent, and therefore, LeDuc inherently discloses issuing an alarm if the system detects an inconsistency between router status signals.

Applicant amends each of the independent claims to recite that the alarm issued by the apparatus, methods, and code recited in the various independent claims indicates that the status messages are inconsistent. See, e.g., p. 14, lines 17–20. More particularly, amended independent claims 1, 11, 21, and 23 recite “an alarm signal that indicates that the signal comparison reveals that the first and second router status messages are inconsistent.” Amended

independent claims 7, 17, and 22 recite “an alarm signal that indicates that the received signal and the database entry are inconsistent.”

LeDuc fails to teach or suggest such alarms. The alarm disclosed in LeDuc only indicates whether a link is out-of-service. LeDuc does not teach or suggest an alarm that differentiates between the two scenarios described above, i.e., 1) both status signals each indicate their corresponding port is out-of-service, and 2) one status signal indicates its corresponding port is out-of-service and the second status signal indicates its corresponding port is in-service. The issuance of an alarm which differentiates between these scenarios, however, is the explicit subject matter of each and every amended independent claim.

Thus, Applicant requests reconsideration and withdrawal of the §102 rejections of amended independent claims 1, 7, 11, 17, and 21–23. Sundaram fails to bridge the gap in LeDuc. Claims 2–6, 8–10, 12–16, and 18–20 depend from claims 1, 7, 11, and 17, respectively, and add further limitations thereto. Thus, Applicant requests reconsideration and withdrawal of the §102 and §103 rejections of claims 2–6, 8–10, 12–16, and 18–20, as well.

In view of the above amendment, Applicant believes the pending application is in condition for allowance.

Applicant believes no fee is due with this response other than as reflected on the enclosed Fee Transmittal. However, if a fee is due, please charge our Deposit Account No. 18-1945, under Order No. BBNT-P01-318 from which the undersigned is authorized to draw.

Dated: March 23, 2005

Respectfully submitted,

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